ASSIGNMENT A

Use the information below to complete the exercise that follows.

A second-grade teacher frequently uses the following strategy when working with struggling readers who are performing below the second-grade fluency benchmark. The teacher selects a variety of supplementary texts that use a controlled vocabulary (i.e., nearly all the words are high-frequency sight words or easily decodable words). The teacher then has the students read these texts aloud quietly to themselves over a period of days as the teacher monitors their reading.

Examinee Task

Using your knowledge of reading fluency, write a response in which you:

•   identify what aspect of fluency (i.e., accuracy, reading rate, or prosody) this instructional strategy primarily develops; and

•   explain how this instructional strategy promotes development of the aspect you identified.

Be sure to relate your response to specific features of the instructional strategy described above.

SAMPLE RESPONSES AND EVALUATIONS FOR OPEN-ENDED ASSIGNMENTS

Sample Response for Assignment A—Domain 3

This instructional strategy primarily helps develop students' reading rate. The selected texts help support development of reading rate because they use controlled vocabulary (i.e., primarily easily decodable words and high-frequency sight words). Research shows that reading texts with a high readability is more effective in enhancing reading rate than when readability is not controlled. The strategy also promotes reading rate because the teacher selects "a variety" of these texts and has the students read them "over a period of days." This provides the students with repeated practice reading the same words in a variety of contexts, which helps build their automatic recognition of the words. Automaticity in word recognition is essential for developing reading rate, which enhances fluency.

Evaluation of Sample Response

This assignment assesses competencies in Domain 3. The response fulfills the purpose of the assignment by identifying the aspect of fluency (i.e., reading rate) that this instructional strategy primarily develops and explaining how the strategy promotes this aspect of fluency. The response reflects an accurate understanding of fluency through its discussion of the role of appropriate texts in supporting development of reading rate and the importance of building automaticity to enhance reading rate and fluency. Support for the writer's argument is found in a clear explanation of factors that enhance reading rate (e.g., automaticity of word recognition).

CONTINUE➔

ASSIGNMENT B

Use the information below to complete the exercise that follows.

Prior to having students read a textbook chapter on tree classification, a fifth-grade teacher divides students into small groups and gives each group a set of labeled photographs and diagrams of a particular type of tree (e.g., pines), with each group focusing on a different type of tree. The students examine their photographs and diagrams, write down as many characteristics as they can about their assigned tree, and then present their findings to the whole class. As students share their ideas, the teacher writes key words and phrases on the board (e.g., *pine trees = have cones, have needles, the needles grow in clusters, the needles are green in both the summer and winter photographs*) and also introduces new terminology (e.g., *trees that have cones are called conifers*). The teacher then conducts a guided whole-class discussion during which students identify characteristics shared by more than one type of tree (e.g., *having cones*) and sort the trees by these characteristics (e.g., *conifers = pines, firs, hemlocks, spruces, cedars, and larches*).

Examinee Task

Using your knowledge of reading instruction, write a response in which you:

- describe how the teacher can effectively differentiate instruction with respect to this activity in order to address the needs of students in the class who are English Learners; and

- explain why the instructional strategy you described would be effective in addressing the needs of these students and promoting their development of vocabulary, academic language, and/or background knowledge.

Be sure to relate your response directly to the activity described above.

CONTINUE➔

Sample Response for Assignment B—Domain 4

Since the activity and textbook chapter require knowledge of vocabulary that's not often used in everyday speech (e.g., cones, needles, clustered) and will likely be unfamiliar to English Learners, the teacher should lead a discussion with them beforehand in which the teacher uses the visuals (i.e., photographs, diagrams) to (1) identify and activate their related background knowledge and (2) explicitly teach the more basic but essential academic vocabulary they'll need to complete the activity and comprehend the textbook chapter successfully. The teacher should reinforce new vocabulary by having the English Learners enter the words in their science notebooks along with notes and drawings about the words' meanings. This strategy would be effective in addressing the needs of English Learners because it uses visuals to support their understanding and activate their background knowledge, explicitly teaches essential vocabulary to support their learning and reading, and reinforces new vocabulary through discussion and writing.

Evaluation of Sample Response

This assignment assesses competencies in Domain 4. The response fulfills the purpose of the assignment by describing an effective strategy for differentiating instruction for the target students and explaining why the strategy would be effective in addressing their needs. The response reflects an accurate understanding of vocabulary development and effective strategies for differentiating vocabulary instruction for English Learners. Support for the writer's argument is found in a clear explanation of the types of words that should be the focus of the differentiated lesson and how best to teach these words in order to support the students' reading and learning.

Important Notes About Assignment B (Domain 4)

The Examinee Task in Assignment B may ask candidates to describe a strategy for differentiating the given activity for students in the class who are advanced learners*, struggling readers*, English Learners, OR students with special needs (e.g., a student with a learning disability). A successful response to Assignment B will reflect an understanding of strategies that are appropriate for differentiating reading instruction for the specific group of students identified in the Examinee Task.

*Since Assignment B assesses competencies in Domain 4, the term *advanced learners* in this Examinee Task refers to students who are advanced in vocabulary, academic language, and/or background knowledge, while the term *struggling readers* refers to students who are experiencing difficulty learning to read because they lack prerequisite knowledge and skills in vocabulary, academic language, and/or background knowledge.

ASSIGNMENT C

Use the information below to complete the exercise that follows.

At the beginning of the year, a fourth-grade teacher uses the following procedure as part of an informal assessment of students' word analysis skills.

In this assessment, the teacher asks individual students to read aloud from a list of 50 words. As students read, the teacher makes a record of their performance on a separate copy of the list, using check marks to indicate words a student reads easily and accurately and using simplified phonetic transcription to record any errors.

Below are some of the words used in the assessment, followed by the teacher's record of one student's reading performance.

stretch	✓	recess	✓
drape	✓	settlement	[sĕt' lĕm ĕnt']
safety	[săf' ə t ē']	deadline	✓
begin	✓	influenced	[ĭn flŭnkt']
opposite	[ō' pō sīt']	disagreement	[dĭ' săg' rē mĕnt]

Examinee Task

Based on your analysis of the assessment evidence provided, write a response in which you:

1. identify one important need demonstrated by this student in the area of word analysis;

2. describe an instructional strategy or activity to address this need; and

3. explain why the instructional strategy or activity you described would be effective for this purpose, citing evidence from the student's performance to support your response.

CONTINUE➔

Sample Response for Assignment C—Domain 2

One need demonstrated by this student is difficulty using structural analysis to decode multisyllabic words. For example, the student doesn't seem to recognize roots (e.g., safe, settle, agree) and affixes (e.g., -ty, -ment, dis-) in words that contain multiple morphemes, so the student makes syllable breaks in the middle of morphemes (e.g., pronouncing "safety" as [săf-ət-ē].

One strategy that would help the student would be using explicit instruction to promote the student's automatic recognition of common affixes. For example, to build automatic recognition of the prefix dis-, the teacher should have the student practice reading it in isolation in short lists, in which several instances of dis- appear with affixes the student has already mastered. Next, the student practices reading dis- in word-reading exercises using short, decodable words (e.g., dislike, discard). The teacher gradually introduces increasingly complex words and short passage-reading exercises containing the target affix. The teacher repeats this strategy to teach other affixes the student doesn't recognize automatically and to reinforce affixes recently taught by including them among the mastered affixes in the exercises.

This strategy would be effective in addressing the student's need because automatic recognition of affixes will help the student decode multisyllabic words that contain multiple morphemes, including helping the student distinguish a word's root. The strategy provides ample practice and reinforcement reading target affixes in increasingly complex contexts.

Evaluation of Sample Response

This assignment assesses one or more competencies in Domain 2. The response fulfills the purpose of the assignment by accurately identifying a need demonstrated by the student in word analysis, describing an effective strategy for addressing this need, and explaining why the strategy would be effective. The writer demonstrates an accurate understanding of structural analysis and related terminology (e.g., morphemes) and also describes effective procedures for promoting automatic recognition of a target affix. The writer offers strong support for the response by providing appropriate, accurate details and an accurate rationale explaining why the described instructional strategy would be effective.

ASSIGNMENT D

Use the information below to complete the exercise that follows.

A first-grade teacher is assessing a student's reading comprehension of a story that he reads fluently and accurately by having the student retell the story. The story is printed below.

> Pam is at school. She plays a new game called "Red Light Green Light." A girl tells her how to play the game. First, Pam has to run as fast as she can. She likes to run. When she runs fast she can feel the wind on her face. Next, the girl says, "Red light!" Pam has to stop. She must stand still. Then the girl says, "Green light!" Now, Pam can run again. She runs fast. Pam likes the new game. She wants to play it with her friend Rosa after school.

After the student reads the story, the teacher asks him to "tell me the story in your own words." Printed below is the student's oral response.

> It's a story about some girls. One girl is named Pam. She doesn't know how to cross the street.

The teacher then asks a targeted question to try to prompt the student to elaborate on his response. Below is the student's response to the question, "How do you know that Pam needs to learn about crossing the street? Tell me as much as you can remember."

> Because she doesn't even know about red lights and green lights. How red is for stop and green is for go. I think she's a little kid. And this other girl bosses her around. Pam wants to run in the wind, but the other girl makes her stop. She yells, "Red light!" and then Pam stops. I think the other girl tells her about crossing the street when the cars stop. So, she learns about it.

The teacher completes the assessment by asking the student, "What else do you think Pam will do?" The student responds:

> Maybe Pam will tell the girl to stop bossing her around.

Examinee Task

Using your knowledge of reading comprehension, write a response in which you:

1. identify one reading comprehension need demonstrated by this student;

2. describe an instructional strategy or activity to help address this need; and

3. explain why the strategy or activity you described would be effective for this purpose.

CONTINUE➔

Sample Response for Assignment D—Domain 5

The student demonstrated difficulty with literal comprehension, which led to his making incorrect inferences. Since the student read the story aloud "fluently and accurately," his difficulty is probably not caused by inaccurate decoding or lack of fluency but rather by a lack of attention to what he was reading. Therefore, the first thing I would do is have the student reread the story.

If after rereading the student still misses the main idea (that the girls are playing a game), I would use think-aloud and modeling to teach self-questioning as a comprehension strategy. To begin, I'd read aloud the first couple lines of the story, pausing periodically to ask a few questions, which I'd answer myself. Since the student's primary difficulty is with literal comprehension, I would focus on literal questions (e.g., Where is Pam? What is she doing? Who is she with?). Then, as I continue reading and questioning, I'd have the student answer my questions. Finally, I'd encourage him to continue reading while I help him ask and answer his own questions. As a follow-up, I'd have him practice this self-questioning strategy out loud with other passages while I monitored him.

This strategy would be effective in improving the student's literal comprehension because it models and reinforces a technique he can use to monitor his own literal understanding as he reads.

Evaluation of Sample Response

This assignment assesses one or more competencies in Domain 5. The response fulfills the purpose of the assignment by discussing the student's reading need in literal comprehension, describing an effective strategy for addressing the student's need by promoting his use of self-questioning during reading, and explaining why this approach would enhance the student's comprehension. The writer accurately identifies the student's literal comprehension need, as well as consequences of that need (incorrect inferences). The writer also demonstrates understanding of the interrelationships between decoding, fluency, and comprehension and that rereading a text enhances a student's fluency and comprehension with respect to that text. The writer then goes on to demonstrate knowledge of an effective strategy for enhancing the student's literal comprehension by using think-aloud and guided practice to promote his use of self-questioning. The writer supports the response with relevant, accurate details (e.g., regarding types of questions to use when modeling self-questioning for literal comprehension, the importance of giving the student follow-up activities for practice) and a clear rationale explaining why the strategy described can be expected to improve the student's literal comprehension.